

Senator Kent Conrad (D-ND) - Senate Floor Statement on Conrad-Domenici Budget Agreement - 6/6/02

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, when the Senator from Texas objected to the unanimous consent request that was made by the Senator from Nevada, what he was objecting to was a bipartisan agreement on a budget framework and the extension of the budget disciplines that expired at the end of September. All we were asking was for the body to have an opportunity to vote after the cloture vote this morning. That is because under the rules of the Senate, postcloture, that amendment to have a budget, to have the budget disciplines extended, will not be permitted.

There has been criticism that we have not had a budget for this year. I think all of us understand the jeopardy of not having a budget framework and the lack of the budget disciplines, which expire in September extended. This was an opportunity to address those critical concerns. I regret that the Senator from Texas objected. He doesn't want to give the body an opportunity to vote, to discuss, to debate, and to decide.

We had a chance to put in place a budget framework and to extend the budget disciplines to keep the appropriations process from spiraling out of control. We will have to revisit that issue, but I hope people will think carefully about whether we really do not want to have any budget disciplines as we go through the appropriations process.

I thank the Chair.

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Mr. CONRAD. I say to my colleague from Texas, when he says there were no number limits in what I was offering, he is wrong. He objected to putting in the very limits that he requests. This was our opportunity. We had a chance to have a budget framework and to extend the budget disciplines and the Senator from Texas said no. We will not even allow the body to consider it.